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Morning Newspapers - Thursday, 6th August, 1959

Evening Newspapers - Thursday, 6th August, 1959

Broadcasting Stations - 6 a.m., Thursday, 6th August, 1959

### RETAIL PRICES - JUNE QUARTER, 1959

Index numbers of retail prices for the June quarter of 1959 (with the weighted average of the six capital cities in 1923-1927 as base of 1,000) were as shown below.

#### "C" Series Retail Price Index Numbers and Percentage Increases, June Quarter, 1959

City	Aggregate All Groups			All Groups, excluding Price Movements in Potatoes and Onions		
	Index Number	Increase <sup>a</sup> from -		Index Number	Increase from -	
		June Qtr., 1958	March Qtr., 1959		June Qtr., 1958	March Qtr., 1959
		%	%		%	%
Brisbane ..	2552	3.7	0.1	2575	3.3	0.5
Toowoomba ..	2494	2.3	-0.1	2513	1.8	0.4
Rockhampton ..	2561	5.1	0.1	2581	4.7	0.7
Townsville ..	2695	5.8	-0.2	2718	5.4	0.1
Bundaberg ..	2538	4.0	0.2	2557	3.6	0.8
Weighted Average						
Five Towns ..	2558	3.8	0.0	2580	3.5	0.5

a Minus (-) indicates decrease.

The "C" Series index number for Brisbane remained almost stationary during the June Quarter, 1959, rising by only 0.1 per cent. on the previous quarter. This was the smallest rise recorded since March, 1957, when the index fell by 0.6 per cent. If the price movements of potatoes and onions, which are subject to violent seasonal fluctuations, are excluded, the slight upward trend was somewhat more pronounced at 0.5 per cent.

During the past 12 months the complete index rose by 3.7 per cent. compared with 5.3 per cent. during the corresponding period a year earlier.

In Brisbane, substantially reduced potato prices more than outweighed increases in other food items, resulting in a decrease of 0.9 per cent. in the food group of the index. Meat prices, which rose sharply in January of this year and contributed largely to the 1.0 per cent. increase in the "C" Series index during the March quarter, declined during the subsequent months, but then recorded another pronounced rise in June. This placed June meat prices only slightly higher than in January. However, the quarterly average meat prices, which rose from December quarter to March, remained practically unchanged from March to June quarters.

A steady upward movement was apparent during the quarter in the Clothing and Footwear and Rent groups in Brisbane, while in the miscellaneous items the variation was insignificant.

Changes in sections of the index are shown in the following table.

#### Retail Prices, Percentage Increases<sup>a</sup>, June Quarter, 1959

City	Food and Groceries			Clothing and Footwear		Miscellaneous Items	
	From Year Ended June, 1939	From March Quarter, 1959		From Year Ended June, 1939	From Mar. Quarter, 1959	From Year Ended June, 1939	From Mar. Quarter, 1959
	A	A	B	1939	1959	1939	1959
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Brisbane ..	241.0	-0.9	0.2	304.5	0.7	149.7	0.0
Toowoomba	252.6	-1.0	0.2	306.0	0.6	148.4	0.0
Rockhampton	229.9	0.0	1.3	297.6	0.4	165.1	0.0
Townsville	226.6	-2.4	-1.8	300.4	0.8	162.5	0.0
Bundaberg	232.6	0.3	1.6	303.6	0.5	151.0	-0.0

a Minus (-) indicates decrease.



## Food and Groceries

Considerably reduced potato prices in all cities resulted in a decrease in this group in all cities except Rockhampton and Bundaberg, where meat prices continued to rise. In Brisbane and Toowoomba, meat prices varied little, while they decreased considerably in Townsville, where this and the effect of potato prices caused the greatest decrease, 2.4 per cent., in the food group. Other price variations were a substantial increase in onions and eggs and a slight decrease in breakfast foods such as rolled oats.

## Clothing and Footwear

As in most winter quarters, the clothing and footwear group recorded a slight upward movement, ranging from 0.4 per cent. in Rockhampton to 0.8 per cent. in Townsville. All footwear items increased in price, as also did ladies' costumes and knitwear, men's and ladies' felt hats, and children's top coats. In contrast men's and boys' winter underwear decreased slightly.

## Miscellaneous

This group was virtually stable during the quarter, the slight upward movement being less than 0.05 per cent. for this section of the index. Small price rises in some items were almost counter-balanced by decreased blanket prices.

## Rent (4 and 5 roomed houses)

The rent index increased in Townsville, 4.9 per cent.; Brisbane, 1.7 per cent.; Toowoomba, 0.9 per cent.; and remained unchanged elsewhere.

## Commonwealth and State Basic Wage Rates

The Commonwealth industrial authority suspended automatic ("cost of living") adjustments after the adjustment which operated from the beginning of the first pay-period in August, 1953. Since that date, adjustments to the basic wages have been made from time to time, often on special applications, both by the Commonwealth and State industrial authorities. The latest of such applications to the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission resulted in the addition of 15s. to the male basic wage in all States, with corresponding adjustments to female and juvenile rates, to operate from 11th June, 1959. At present, the New South Wales basic wage alone is varied automatically with movements of the index numbers. In Queensland and Western Australia, the State Industrial Courts have usually varied the wage after the index numbers have been published. Following publication of the index numbers for the June quarter, 1959, the Queensland State Industrial Court made no change to its basic wage, while in Western Australia, the metropolitan basic wage was increased by 3s. 6d. for males and 2s. 3d. for females. In Sydney, an "automatic" increase of 1s. was applied to the male basic wage and 6d. for females. Following the Commonwealth Commission's increase of 15s. to the male basic wage, adjustments (not "cost of living") were made in Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania of 12s., 15s., and 10s., respectively, thus placing the State and Commonwealth male basic wages at the same level.

Current basic wage rates are given in the following table.

Retail Prices and Basic Wage Rates  
Australian Capital Cities

Capital City	Retail Price Index				Common-wealth Basic Wage	State Basic Wage					
	March Qtr., 1959		June Qtr., 1959		Males <sup>a</sup>	Males	Females	Date of Operation <sup>b</sup>			
	A	B	A	B							
					£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.				
Brisbane	2550	2562	2552	2575	12 18 0	13 3 0	8 19 0	27.4.59			
Sydney	2681	2682	2690	2696	14 3 0	13 17 0	10 7 6	1.8.59 <sup>b</sup>			
Melbourne	2662	2648	2684	2678	13 15 0	13 15 0	10 6 0	22.6.59			
Adelaide	2609	2605	2625	2632	13 11 0	13 11 0	10 3 0	15.6.59 <sup>b</sup>			
Perth ..	2770	2771	2803	2801	13 16 0	13 18 7	9 1 1	27.7.59			
Hobart	2795	2793	2787	2797	14 2 0	14 2 0	10 11 6	1.7.59 <sup>b</sup>			

Note: A includes, and B excludes, price movements due to potatoes and onions.

a Operative first pay-period beginning on or after 11th June, 1959. The female rates are 75 per cent. of the male rates.

b These rates operate from the first pay-period commencing on or after the date shown.

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## The "C" Series Retail Price Index

(Base for Each Section: Weighted Average of Six Capital Cities, 1923-1927 = 1,000)

City	Year Ended June, 1939	Year Ended March, 1959	Year Ended June, 1959	Quarter Ended -				
				June, 1958	Sept., 1958	Dec., 1958	March, 1959	June, 1959
1. Aggregate - All Groups								
Brisbane ..	863	2505	2528	2462	2484	2525	2550	2552
Toowoomba ..	851	2466	2480	2439	2440	2488	2497	2494
Rockhampton ..	861	2490	2521	2436	2456	2510	2558	2561
Townsville ..	912	2609	2646	2547	2561	2629	2700	2695
Bundaberg ..	841	2484	2508	2440	2465	2498	2532	2538
Weighted Average Five Towns	864	2508	2531	2464	2483	2527	2557	2558
2. All Groups EXCLUDING price movements of potatoes and onions (a)								
Brisbane ..	863	2527	2548	2492	2508	2547	2562	2575
Toowoomba ..	851	2487	2498	2468	2466	2508	2504	2513
Rockhampton ..	861	2511	2540	2465	2481	2533	2564	2581
Townsville ..	912	2637	2672	2578	2594	2660	2714	2718
Bundaberg ..	841	2505	2527	2469	2494	2519	2537	2557
Weighted Average Five Towns	864	2530	2552	2493	2508	2550	2568	2580
3. Food and Groceries								
Brisbane ..	856	2855	2890	2782	2820	2874	2945	2919
Toowoomba ..	814	2830	2852	2784	2780	2858	2898	2870
Rockhampton ..	895	2818	2871	2740	2758	2822	2952	2953
Townsville ..	955	3011	3067	2896	2922	3030	3195	3119
Bundaberg ..	903	2915	2950	2864	2884	2916	2995	3003
Weighted Average Five Towns ..	864	2863	2899	2789	2821	2881	2961	2934
4. Food and Groceries EXCLUDING price movements of potatoes and onions (a)								
Brisbane ..	856	2919	2949	2867	2888	2939	2981	2987
Toowoomba ..	814	2888	2902	2866	2852	2916	2916	2923
Rockhampton ..	895	2875	2922	2821	2825	2882	2972	3010
Townsville ..	955	3090	3141	2982	3015	3121	3242	3185
Bundaberg ..	903	2974	3002	2947	2965	2975	3010	3057
Weighted Average Five Towns	864	2926	2958	2874	2891	2946	2994	2999
5. Clothing and Footwear								
Brisbane ..	829	3328	3337	3317	3322	3340	3331	3353
Toowoomba ..	829	3357	3360	3352	3354	3373	3347	3366
Rockhampton ..	845	3340	3348	3330	3334	3351	3346	3360
Townsville ..	840	3330	3341	3317	3324	3340	3337	3363
Bundaberg ..	839	3374	3379	3367	3371	3390	3369	3386
Weighted Average Five Towns	831	3332	3340	3322	3327	3344	3334	3356

(a) Excluded as from September quarter, 1955.